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From left, Alan Baylis, Chris Smithson, Mike Middleton, Tony King, Colin Timberlake, Brian Tegg, Gordon Ross and John Wilkinson launch the Poppy Appeal in Banbury town centre

RED ALERT FOR RECORD YEAR

A RECORD-breaking month of fundraising for the Royal British Legion could be under way in North Oxfordshire after the Poppy Appeal launch in Banbury.

Military songs were played in the town's High Street on Saturday while cadets, veterans passers-by were treated to a display of Second World War vehicles scattered with poppies.

Last year saw £43,770 raised by the Royal British Legion's Banbury branch – the most since it was set up in 1921.

But after three collection boxes were stuffed within hours of the 2016 launch, branch chairman and Poppy Appeal organiser Chris Smithson said he hoped to do even better. Mr Smithson, who was in the Royal Signals for 25 years and left in 1995, said: "I am hopeful – North Oxfordshire has always been very good.

"We normally raise the most in the county and there is lots of support.

"There's a big ex-military presence but also it's the result of a lot of hard work on the part of other people."

"It's even more important in the times we are in – there's lots of young people now surviving their wounds because of medical advances."

About 350 collection boxes are now in

Hannah Somerville
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shops and factories around Banbury, including Tesco and Morrisons.

More than 30 volunteers will be pounding the pavements distributing boxes and tins between now and November 13.

Banbury town mayor Gordon Ross said the launch had been 'terrific' and he had seen a lot of £5, £10 and £20 notes going into the boxes.

He said: "People were exceedingly generous, putting an awful lot of money in, and there were military vehicles bedecked with poppies.

"North Oxfordshire has got a strong Royal British Legion and a lot of people turn out for the appeal, Armed Forces Day, the Battle of Britain and Remembrance Sunday.

"We need to remember that those people from the First World War onwards put their lives on the line to save this country, and to defend it.

"Even as the years pass what they did has not diminished in importance and we should honour them."

Young people are also doing their bit, with Banbury Sea Cadets holding collections at Tesco while preparing

for the Remembrance parade. Chairman Susan Davis said: "It's a fantastic appeal. We are all in the Armed Forces and it's something the kids can get involved in."

Youngsters from schools including St John's and St Mary's will lay wreaths at the Armistice Day service in People's Park on Friday, November 11.

The RBL's Oxfordshire Poppy Appeal launch took place last week at Vauxhall Barracks in Didcot, the home of bomb disposal experts 11 Explosive Ordnance Disposal Regiment. A robot usually deployed in combat zones was used to present the first poppy of the year to RBL county chairman Lynda Atkins.

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'Gimmick' may put services at risk of being cut

RESIDENTS across the county could lose services and see community facilities crumble if politicians pursue plans to cap council tax, town leaders have warned.

The government is considering telling certain town and parish councils they must hold referendums from next year if they want to hike precepts by more than two per cent or £5.

Authorities are concerned that the costly polls would mean that residents would vote down the rises, which could lead to budgets being drained.

Christine Lalley, county officer for the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils, said: "This has been hanging over our heads for years and it's come back with a vengeance.

"It's utter nonsense. Two per cent more of a tiny figure is still a tiny figure. It's pathetic. It's a sledgehammer to crack a very tiny nut.

"With town and parish councillors we can just talk to them at the pub or in the shop if we are not happy.

"A referendum is a poor use of money."

Proposals are under consultation and would apply to councils with a band D precept exceeding £75.46 this year, and a total precept income of at least £500,000.

In Oxfordshire this affects Witney, Banbury, Bicester, Carterton, Didcot, Thame, Abingdon and Kidlington councils.

Referendum rules are already in place for larger authorities including Oxfordshire County Council and district councils.

Didcot Town Council leader Bill Service said the plan was a government 'gimmick' and could lead to facilities deteriorating or even being shut.

He said: "We wouldn't have been able to refurbish the Civic Hall if we had been limited. It's our only way of raising funds to improve public facilities.

"It may come to a stage if we don't think the council can afford it that facilities will have to close."

A spokesman for the Department for Communities and Local Government said: "The government is committed to keeping council tax low and maintaining the right of local electorates to approve or veto excessive council tax rises."

Takeaway boss shrugs off one-star rating for hygiene

Inspector found dirty and unsafe methods used to prepare and cook food

Hannah Somerville
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AN INDIAN takeaway manager has shrugged off a recent scathing food hygiene report, saying the rating from Cherwell District Council 'really doesn't matter' as he has since cleaned the place up.

The Delhi Indian Takeaway in Southam Road promises Banbury residents a tantalising array of Tandoori specialities, tikka and biryani dishes.

But on visiting the premises on September 20 this year inspectors were less than impressed and slapped management with a one-star rating.

Key concerns included chopping boards being used for both raw and ready-to-eat foods, while raw meat and salad items were prepared next to each other, risking cross-contamination.

Also criticised was the use of reusable cleaning cloths soaked in bleach overnight when they needed to be put in a washing machine. The floor under many of the units was dirty and hand contact points such as fridge handles and the light switch were dirty.

In a letter the inspector said: "I understand you have worked in the catering/manufacturing industry for a number of years but it became apparent during the visit that your level of food hygiene awareness was inadequate in some areas. You should therefore undertake food hygiene training."

Manager Mazhar Iqbal said another



Delhi Indian Takeaway in Southam Road, Banbury

visit to the premises was due to take place in the next few weeks and he had made some changes.

He said: "It was just basically hygiene, cleaning and mostly paperwork. It's where to wash things and where to keep them, with the meat

on the bottom and salad on the top, and cooking meat separately."

But he added: "It really doesn't matter. Well, not to me anyway. They said you can stick the writing on the window, or not, as long as everything is clear.

"Some people get four, some people get three, they gave me a one, but it's optional whether you put it on or not and I am confident about the hygiene of my business now.

"I will be asking for a five and I'm definitely confident."

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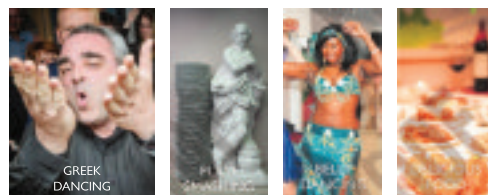
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Post Office workers bring central London to a standstill at a demonstration

Post staff join day of strikes over changes

Union anger grows at move of branches into WH Smith outlets

Hannah Somerville
hsomerville@nqo.com

POST Office workers in Oxford and Banbury joined a national day of strikes to highlight the 'desperate' state of the service.

The Crown branch in St Aldate's was closed for the whole day on Monday after 12 staff members walked out in solidarity with others in the UK.

Some 3,500 members of the Communication Workers' Union took part in industrial action to protest ongoing closures, franchising and pension changes at local branches.

Area representative Tim Pavelin said he was 'really pleased' members in Oxford had supported the call for strike action, adding that the mood was 'despondent'.

He said: "The Post Office doesn't seem to have a sustainable strategy and the union has resorted to this to try and bring the Post Office back to the negotiating table. We need to highlight what a desperate state the network is in."

In April 2012 Royal Mail and the Post Office split to become two separate entities, with the latter still a publicly-owned en-



ty. Some 70 branches are now due to be franchised out to WH Smith including Banbury Post Office, which will relocate to Castle Quay on Wednesday, November 9.

Mr Pavelin said: "Banbury will be lost as a directly-owned office and it will be stuck into the back of a shop, which the union considers an inferior service."

"Since we split from Royal Mail the Post Office has been lurching from crisis to crisis and it's a travesty that people assume it's there forever; it is dwindling."

About 100 workers along with a horse-drawn carriage, a coffin and four-piece jazz band processed through Parliament Square to draw attention to their plight.

In Oxford, boxes were emptied as normal by Royal Mail but no further post could be sent via

the St Aldate's branch. Other branches were open as normal during the day.

The Post Office has said that moving post office services to retail outlets such as WH Smith leads to longer opening hours.

Kevin Gilliland, the company's network and sales director, said it was mostly 'business as usual' for the 50,000 people working in its 11,000 branches.

"We must make changes to safeguard the level of service for future generations."

"The Post Office is committed to keeping its branches at the heart of communities. But we must also respond to changing customer needs."

"Over the last four years we have added more than 200,000 extra opening hours each week, and become the largest UK retail network open on Sundays."

Update on financial progress at meeting

PROGRESS made on a programme to improve financial management systems at Oxfordshire County Council will be discussed at a meeting.

Councillors will be updated on the financial control improvement plan when the audit and governance committee meets next Wednesday.

It follows a move in July 2015 that saw a new partnership

agreed between the county council and Hampshire County Council to deliver HR and financial operations through the latter's integrated business centre.

Chief finance officer Lorna Baxter will update councillors on how the financial improvement plan has progressed so far.

The meeting will also see Ms Baxter present a mid-term

review of the council's treasure management activity.

In addition there will be an update on 'transformation' - a programme that aims to ensure the council is fit for the future. It is hoped this will help to meet a requirement to make £15m of savings in the coming years.

The meeting will be held at County Hall in New Road, Oxford, from 2pm and is open to the public.

Fog wreaks havoc

THICK fog across the county caused problems on the roads on Monday morning.

The dense fog settled from around 6.30am and led to collisions and congestion as early risers were left frustrated on their way to work.

Several crashes were reported including one on the M40 Southbound between J10 at Ardley and J11 at Banbury which caused delays.

A motorcyclist was also treated by ambulance crews for a shoulder injury following a crash at about 8am on the Oxford Eastern By-Pass Road.

Help hospital radio

VOLUNTEERS interested in chatting to patients on the busy wards of Banbury's Horton General Hospital, are being called to help with broadcasts for Radio Horton.

The local charity is looking for people with a few hours to spare on a Monday, Wednesday or a Friday to join the ward visiting team.

Members talk to patients about their experience and invite them to choose music they can listen to later that evening on Radio Horton's request programme.

Anyone interested in finding out more should email committee@radiohorton.co.uk

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Figures show no driver punished for smoking

NO ONE in Oxfordshire has been punished for smoking in a car with children since it became illegal last year, with Thames Valley Police saying officers will not go out of their way to stop drivers breaking the law.

Figures obtained by the Banbury Cake through a Freedom of Information request reveal no adult has been referred to court, fined or even warned for committing the driving offence.

The legislation, which came in last October, aims to protect young people under 18 from second-hand smoke, but police insist they are more concerned with other road crimes.

Chief Inspector Henry Parsons, head of roads policing for Thames Valley Police, said: "Officers focus enforcement activity on reducing the numbers of people who die or who are seriously injured on the roads through targeted enforcement of speed, distraction, drink or drug driving and seatbelt offences.

"When the existing smoke-free law was extended to vehicles in October 2015, police forces across the country, including Thames Valley Police, were advised to

take an educational, advisory and non-confrontational approach when enforcing the new legislation."

Ch Insp Parsons said only when officers are policing other road crimes would action be taken.

He added: "It is expected officers will most frequently detect whether anyone is smoking in a vehicle where a person under the age of 18 is present while conducting other road safety activities."

The Public Health Cabinet Member for Oxfordshire County Council, Hilary Hibbert-Biles said she is happy the smoking ban was introduced.

She said: "For me, the existence of the law and the message that sends out is more important than the number of prosecutions."

David Cunningham, a geography teacher at Headington Girls School, expressed disappointment with Thames Valley Police.

The 33-year-old Botley resident said: "I find it deplorable that police seem to be ignoring this important piece of legislation.

"I do hope the police can be more proactive on this issue."

Anti-smoking group SmokefreeOxfordshire declined to comment.

Top band's drummer hands over cheque



Radiohead drummer Phil Selway presents SeeSaw director Dr Helen Mackinnon with the cheque for £8,632 at Sibford School

A WINDFALL for a unique charity supporting bereaved young people in Oxfordshire was given extra star quality at a handover this month.

Earlier this year parents at Sibford School, near Banbury, held an auction as part of the school's annual summer ball in aid of Oxford-based charity SeeSaw.

Among the top fundraising lots was a unique autographed copy of a deluxe vinyl edition of Radiohead's latest album, *A Moon Shaped Pool*.

Phil Selway, the drummer of Radiohead, took time out to hand over the £8,632 cheque to representatives from the charity.

He said: "I was delighted to come along to meet with SeeSaw. "Losing a family member can be very hard and SeeSaw is doing some wonderful work to help people cope."

The donation came the day after it was announced that Radiohead, who have their roots in Oxford and continue to perform in the city, would headline Glastonbury 2017.

All funds raised by the Sibford parents will go towards SeeSaw's crucial work with children and young people trying to cope with the death of a loved one.

The charity helps children prepare 'memory boxes' to

remember the person who has died, trains teachers to support bereaved children in class and runs activity days for groups of children struggling to cope with their loss.

It also provides specialist literature for support workers and schools in the UK. It has annual running costs of about £300,000.

Dr Helen Mackinnon, director of SeeSaw, said: "This will enable us to fund many things including memory boxes, family days out and training.

"It will also support our 'Preparing for Christmas' day where we help families face-up to their first Christmas without a loved one."

Drug debt attack man gets 6 years

'Police baton' attacker sobs in court as judge sends him to the cells

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A FATHER who smashed a man across the face, leaving him with a fractured eye socket, over a £20 drugs debt has been locked up for six years.

Stephen Cooper sobbed as jurors unanimously convicted him of causing grievous bodily harm with intent to Nicholas Webster on March 3 last year.

The 22-year-old muttered 'love you' to his partner as he was led to the cells at Oxford Crown Court.

Jailing Cooper, Judge Peter Ross told the defendant he caused 'bad' injuries to his victim during the 'unpleasant' Banbury attack but was unsure if he was a drug dealer.

He went on to say: "The violence that took place was violence that was inflicted as a consequence of people's involvement in drugs."

During the trial, Mr Webster said Cooper called him demanding £20 after supplying the victim with cannabis a couple of days earlier. Soon after he spotted the defendant strolling to

his Alma Road home, where his young daughter was, along with two men.

Cooper asked Mr Webster to pop to the side of the house for a better chat, 'smashing' him in the face with a weapon which the victim claimed was a police baton.

The witness said he attempted to chase his attacker but was forced to stop as blood was dripping from his face.

Taking the stand, Cooper claimed he went to his victim's house to retrieve £20 he had given Mr Cooper for cannabis earlier in the day.

Cooper, of Padbury Drive, Banbury, was also ordered to pay a victim surcharge.

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Marina motors ahead with expansion plans

Cropredy Marina has been given permission to excavate another 100-berth pool

Plans meet disapproval from residents over its environmental impact

Hannah Somerville
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PLANS to expand a marina just north of Banbury have been approved by Cherwell District Council, despite worries from local residents.

At a meeting of the planning committee last Thursday night, councillors gave the go-ahead to another 100 boat moorings at Cropredy Marina, bringing the total to more than 350.

Councillor Ken Attack said he hoped residents would be pleased by the 'wonderful' expansion to the site off Claydon Road.

As well as pontoons for the moorings, plans include an extra 42 spaces to be added to the existing car park.

A north basin, planted with a native shrub mix, will be created as an extension to the marina and an office on the site will be replaced.

The decision was taken despite concerns that some people were living permanently on the boats at the marina, in contravention of planning laws.

Residents commenting on the application also expressed consternation over the environmental

impact and current light pollution issues getting worse,

In a ten-page response to the proposals posted on Cherwell's webpage, local man Robert Adams said the move could cause 'severe cumulative harm' to the canal's heritage.

He added: "The existing marina is located on the Oxford Canal, which is a conservation area and is a strategic and historic asset."

"While marinas are an essential part of the modern canal scene, they do not have the right to destroy designated landscapes."

"Light spillage at night associated with the marina is currently appalling and the extension would exacerbate this."

Colin Clarke, Cherwell's lead member for planning, said: "We are confident the marina's expansion will not harm local amenities or undermine the canal conservation area."

"The canal is important in the rural economy and we believe this development will support commerce and tourism in the village and local area."

Plans were approved subject to conditions, including a stipulation that plans for external lighting be submitted to Cherwell before installation.

No residential mooring or boat hire will be allowed in the new basin and shrubs will be planted to the north, west and east.

MP asks about news of rise in prison violence

THE Justice Secretary was quizzed about rising violence in prisons by Banbury MP Victoria Prentis.



Mrs Prentis, pictured, who sits on the House of Commons Justice Committee, asked Liz Truss what she was doing to address the problem.

Statistics released last week showed the overall number of assaults in prisons rose by a third to 23,775 in the year to June.

There were almost 6,000 assaults on prison officers in England and Wales.

Speaking in the House of Commons Mrs Prentis said: "Those of us on the justice committee are very concerned by the recent statistics, not just in relation to safety of prison workers but also in relation to vulnerable prisoners."

"Can she tell us what steps she is going to take to improve assessment and screening so those people can be identified at the beginning of their sentence?"

Ms Truss replied: "I am extremely concerned about the level of self harm, which is particularly high in the women's estate."

"We know that the first 24 hours are absolutely vital and we are already taking steps to provide vulnerable prisoners with immediate mental health support and next year we will be bringing a strategy on women offenders."

Council rejects plan

HOUSING plans set to increase the number of homes in by a fifth in Cropredy have been turned down by councillors.

Proposals for up to 60 homes were put forward to Cherwell District Council on Thursday but deemed to be out of keeping with the character of Cropredy.

The development would have been built on land between Station Road and the Chiltern Mainline Railway line.

Cherwell District Council lead member for planning Colin Clarke said: "The adopted Local Plan requires us to pursue sustainable development within villages such as Cropredy."

"But this means proportionate developments which are respectful of the character of the village and its natural setting."

Pupils will sing to raise charity cash

SEVEN hundred schoolchildren from Banbury and the surrounding area will raise their voices in song to raise money for fellow youngsters all over the world.

The 15th Children Singing for Children concert will feature 700 children from 28 primary schools and has once again has a fourth evening added due to its popularity.

Participants in the event, organised by Banbury Rotary Club, will perform alongside professional musicians on November 7, 8, 9 and 10 in St Mary's Church.

Each school choir will sing two songs of its own choice before the massed choir finale based on this year's theme, 'One World'.

Over the years concerts have raised more than £60,000 for charities working with children and young people.

This year's main beneficiaries will be Dogs for Good, which is just outside Banbury and trains assistance dogs for people with disabilities and autism, a Rotary project improving school facilities in Freetown, Sierra Leone and



St Mary's Church

Purple4Polio, the club's national drive to eradicate polio across the world. Organiser Jonathan Meredith said: "The concerts really are a win-win event."

"The children enjoy them, the teachers enjoy them, parents and friends enjoy them, the LiveArts volunteers at St Mary's enjoy them, Rotarians enjoy them - and the children receiving support from the three charitable causes benefit hugely from us all."

"We are enormously grateful to everyone involved for making this such a successful annual event in the Banbury calendar."

There will also be performances by young soloists and the eponymous 'Children Singing for Children' theme song, written specially for the concerts by local teacher Kate MacLean and musician Mike Horth.

Each event begins at 7pm and lasts for 90 minutes.

Tickets cost £5 and are available from Fashion Fabrics in Parsons Street, Banbury. For more information call 01295 262764.

The Rotary club also recently planted 40,000 crocuses around Banbury as a way of raising awareness for Purple4Polio.

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Local fare on sale at new store

LOCAL produce from Oxfordshire producers is being offered to shoppers at a new Co-op store.

The shop in High Street, Middleton Cheney was bought by the Co-op last month with plans being prepared for a full store refit and renovation.

In the meantime, more than 50 locally-sourced products are already on the shelves from firms such as The Meat Joint in nearby Deddington.

The store will become part of the firm's so-called 'regional community' in Banbury, which aims to create a lasting legacy in the region through fundraising, volunteering and promoting the importance of sustainability.

Store manager Luke Brown said: "Our arrival is good news for shoppers in Middleton Cheney, and with a wide range of new products, including many sourced from local suppliers, customers will be spoilt for choice when they visit."

"With the Middleton Cheney store joining the family, our colleagues can play a bigger role in our community than before. Our local programme supports a range of good causes and charities."

Trusts take service to people in need

A NEW service bringing medical care to the doorsteps of people in Oxfordshire has been launched by the county's NHS trusts.

The Home Assessment Reablement Team (HART) was launched at the start of October and encompasses 200 doctors, nurses and other health professionals.

It will offer a period of care and support to patients, especially older people, whose needs are stable enough for them to stay at home after a minor accident or illness.

Assistant assessor Gareth Bowden said: "It's a short-term programme for about six weeks but hopefully we can help people go independent before then."

"Anyone who is medically fit can use HART, so mainly elderly patients who need help with daily tasks like washing, dressing and meal preparation."

The service will be run by Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and incorporates the trust's former supported hospital discharge service and the Oxfordshire Reablement Service, which was run by Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust.

Paul Brennan, OUH's director of clinical services, said: "The beauty of HART is that it will be run as a single responsive service, with a single multidisciplinary team, a simple referral process and a single pathway."

"We've reassured patients that the care they receive and their reablement goals will remain under the new service."

"Evidence shows that many patients, in particular frail older people, have a better experience and better outcomes when an inpatient stay is avoided."

People referred to HART will be



Gareth Bowden, assistant assessor for the HART service with Liz Hobbs, service manager, and Kate Williams, physiotherapist, launch the programme at the John Radcliffe Hospital

supported in their homes for a period of up to six weeks, as well as their family and formal carers.

The service was jointly commissioned by Oxfordshire County Council and Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group.

It forms part of a broader plan for county services to provide stronger ambulatory

care with a view to freeing up hospital beds.

Earlier this year, bed-blocking in the county fell to a six-year low following concerted efforts by OUH and other providers to stop unnecessary long stays in hospital.

In June, there were just 57 patients facing a delayed transfer of care. At the time Mr Brennan told the *Banbury Cake* the aim was to 'go even lower'.

Councillor Judith Heathcoat, Oxfordshire County Council's cabinet

member for adult social care, said: "I am delighted to see the start of a new service that will help people improve their independence and live well in the community."

"This service has been jointly designed and commissioned and shows the strength and value of health and social care working together."

Referrals can be made to the HART service by emailing orh-tr.hart@nhs.net or by phoning 01865 572917. Visit www.ouh.nhs.uk/hart

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Town needs your vote to win prize

Hannah Somerville
hsomerville@nqo.com

BANBURY is in need of a late voter surge as the town struggles to get ahead in the Great British High Street competition.

More than a week into the public voting period, a rankings release has revealed it is in second place in the town centre category, behind Blackburn in Lancashire.

Up for grabs is a share of a prize pot worth £100,000 and training from Google's digital taskforce and Twitter for local shops, bars and restaurants.

This year's competition saw a record 900 entries across 14 categories. The 27 finalists were announced on October 18.

Banbury is still ahead of Hemel Hempstead in Hertfordshire in its category.

Department for Communities and Local Government minister Andrew Percy said: "More than 100,000 votes have been cast in



the competition so far, proving that people are passionate about their high streets up and down the country.

"Banbury did fantastically well to make it into the final three but now every vote counts and it needs an extra push to get them title of Britain's best high street."

Votes for Banbury can be cast until Friday, November 18, and alongside the public vote, short-listed high streets will be inspected by judges from retailer British Land, who have a 50 per cent say on who wins the competition. For more information or to vote visit thegreatbritish-higheststreet.co.uk

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Councils' boss to leave next year

THE joint chief executive of Cherwell District and South Northamptonshire Councils has announced she will step down from her post in March next year.

Sue Smith made the announcement to staff and councillors, citing her impending 60th birthday as the catalyst for her decision.

She will remain in charge of the two councils until March 2017, before reviewing her options with a view to taking up a less demanding post elsewhere.

She said: "I am approaching my 60th birthday and have decided the time is right for me to work fewer hours and to have more free time."

"This isn't possible in my current post so I will stand down as the joint chief executive in March next year."

"Following this, I will look to pursue a new role elsewhere so I can find the balance between being occupied by work while freeing up more time for recreational hobbies."

"I have spent 37 years working in local government and have thoroughly enjoyed the challenges this has brought."

"The last five years have been spent at Cherwell and South Northants where there have been too many success stories to mention; however, I think the implementation of the joint working initiative across the two authorities does stand out for me."

"Although the members had set the plan up for joint working before I was appointed, being able to carry out that plan and make it a success has been amazing as there were never any guarantees it would work."

Mrs Smith's career in local government began as a recreation assistant at Anglesey Borough Council 37 years ago.

Selfish drivers blamed for £1m speeding fines

Road safety charity claims countywide figure shows lives are being put at risk

Georgina Campbell
gcampbell@nqo.com

SELFISH drivers have been slammed after figures reveal more than £1m worth of speeding fines have been paid this year in Oxfordshire.

Drivers ignoring speed limits shelled out £1,238,400 from January to the end of August – just £400,000 short of the total amount paid in fixed penalty notices in 2015 and with a third of the year to go.

Jack Kushner, from the road safety charity Brake, slammed motorists who put lives at risk.

He said: "Selfish, speeding drivers put not only themselves, but other road users, at serious risk, and it is concerning to see so many reckless individuals still disregarding speed limits in Oxfordshire."

"Evidence shows that driving over the speed limit, or travelling too fast for the conditions of the road, is a contributory factor in more than one in four fatal crashes in the country. Every day we



A speed camera in Botley Road, Oxford

work with families and communities who have been impacted by the devastating effects of speeding."

In figures obtained by the *Banbury Cake*, Botley Road was the road where the highest number of speeding drivers had been caught.

With a speed limit of 30mph, 1,541 fines were given to drivers

racing down the congested road, from the two cameras along the route.

Other hotspots in the county included Marston Road in Oxford, with 1,331 notices given and Woodstock Road in Oxford, with 1,477 notices.

For the last three years, Woodstock Road, has made the top three

for the most amount of notices given. From 2014 to August this year, a total of 3,927 notices were handed out to drivers exceeding the 20 mph limit.

Chief Inspector Henry Parsons, head of roads policing for Thames Valley Police, said speeding was a 'serious issue' in the county.

He said: "It affects people's quality of life and more importantly their safety."

"It is a significant factor in many fatal or serious injury collisions."

"We continue to focus our activity where there are casualty concerns and this explains why increased speeding offences are being detected at some of the locations of fixed cameras. Where the risks have fallen we conduct less enforcement and will decommission fixed camera sites."

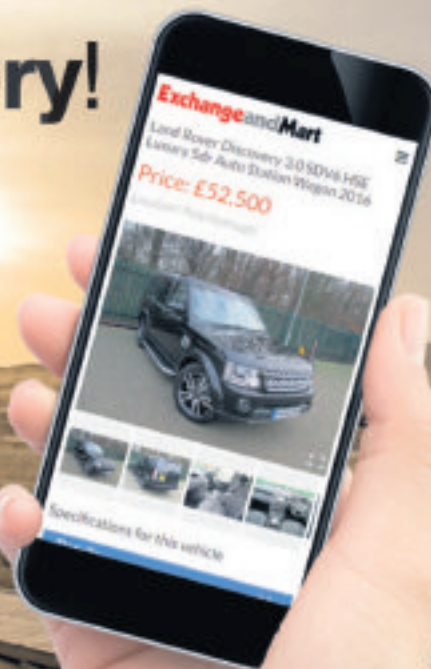
Fines paid in Oxfordshire are on course to come in only marginally lower than last year's total, which stood at £1,679,300.

The cost of a fixed penalty notice is £100, which goes to HM Treasury and drivers also get three penalty points on their licence.

There are currently nine fixed speed cameras in operation at any one time in Oxfordshire.

From 2014 to August this year, drivers on Oxfordshire's roads have paid £4,940,900 in fines.

Explorer unearths new Discovery!



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Stores of goodwill show healthy takings over year

Oxfam shops across the county raise £1.5million from generous shoppers

Luke Sproule
lsproule@nqo.com

THE generosity of Oxfordshire shoppers has seen Oxfam's shops in the county collect an impressive £1.5m for good causes so far this year.

People have been thanked for choosing the charity, which has 16 stores in Oxfordshire, including those in Banbury, Oxford, Abingdon, Bicester, Chipping Norton, Thame, Wallingford and Witney.

The money raised will go towards projects such as supporting people after the recent hurricane in Haiti or providing Syrian families with clean water.

Oxfam area manager for Oxfordshire Jon Adsett said: "We are so grateful to the generous people of Oxfordshire who donate to and buy from our shops.

"This year we managed to raise £1.5m, despite a challenging climate on the high street.

"Our volunteers and staff across the whole of the county work tirelessly to raise as much money as



Oxfam's shop in Chipping Norton

possible and their efforts have definitely paid off."

In the charity's Summertown branch staff have experienced a particularly busy year as customers dug deep to help good causes.

Manager Janet Willis said: "It has been fantastic, the donations have

been brilliant and also the number of people giving money.

"We live in a city that is relatively affluent so people feel they ought to do something.

"Sometimes they will give money or give items such as clothes. If they cannot do that they might vol-

unteer. There are other charities that people want to give to but they are very generous to us."

All the shops have appealed for more volunteers in the run-up to Christmas, with Mr Adsett calling for people from all ages to get involved.

He said just £36 could help the charity provide clean and safe water to families and £100 would pay for toilet and washing facilities for dozens of people made homeless.

Ms Willis added: "Volunteers gain skills and the satisfaction of helping.

"There is a sense of community as well and it is a very good experience.

"Students can put it on their CV and we have some who come to practise their English.

"It is very much a give and take situation.

"You give up some of your time but you gain skills and friends and the shop gains money, so everybody wins."

The charity has appealed for people to be particularly generous this Christmas as it said almost 60 million people worldwide are displaced from their homes – more than at any time since the Second World War.

For more information about volunteering visit oxfam.org.uk

Scales of Justice

CASES heard at magistrates' courts around the county recently:

LEE COUSINS, 24, of Fisher Close, Banbury, was convicted of assaulting Sara Cousins in Bicester on May 10. Handed a community order with a rehabilitation activity requirement and ordered to pay an £85 victim surcharge and £500 costs. Made subject to a restraining order.

KRZYSZTOF TELAK, 40, of Gillett Road, Banbury, admitted harassing Monica Telak in Linnet Road, Bodicote, between February 4 and February 27. Also admitted causing criminal damage by destroying the glass panel of a back door worth £300 belonging to Bedford Pilgrim Housing Association in Bodicote on February 27. Handed a community order with a rehabilitation activity requirement and a 100-hour unpaid work requirement. Also ordered to pay £300 compensation, an £85 victim surcharge and £85 costs.

ANTHONY WINFIELD, 51, of Balmoral Avenue, Banbury, admitted assaulting Keith Parson by beating him in Dover Avenue, Banbury, on August 30. Fined £125 and ordered to pay a £30 victim surcharge and £45 costs.

LLOYD OWERS, 27, of Fulwell Close, Banbury, admitted drink-driving in Oxford Road, Bodicote, on October 1. Had 58 micrograms of alcohol in 100ml of breath, exceeding the limit of 35 micrograms. Fined £325 and ordered to pay a £32 victim surcharge and £85 costs. Handed a 12-month driving ban.

VIVIANNE HART, 50, of School Lane, North Newington, admitted drink-driving in North Newington Road, Banbury, on October 7. Had 77 micrograms of alcohol in 100ml of breath, above the legal limit of 35 micrograms. Fined £250 and ordered to pay a £30 victim surcharge and £85 costs. Banned from driving or holding a licence for 20 months.



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Come along to enjoy fun of Rapunzel

GET ready to let down your hair this Christmas as the Lynden Players present this year's Christmas pantomime, *Rapunzel and the Rascal Prince*.

The wonderfully wicked show takes place from December 1-3 at Middleton Cheney Village Hall.

The show tells the story of Rapunzel, who is locked away in a tower for 16 years and raised by the witch Ragwort – her parents' punishment for stealing herbs from Ragwort's garden.

Rapunzel is unconvinced of her 'mother's' love for her, and longs to leave her tower and explore the world. Meanwhile, Hyacinth Horseradish is desperately trying to invent 'resistiscorch' crops to save the villagers' crops from the fiery breath of the giant fire-breathing worm that has terrified the village for 16 years.

Everything changes, however, when Rapsallion, the Rascal Prince, arrives in the kingdom, comes across a certain tower and meets a lonely, long-haired maiden...but not if Ragwort the witch and the giant fire-breathing worm have anything to say about it.

Director Jo Bailey said: "This is a fantastic family pantomime, for children and big kids of all ages – we've got loads of colourful characters for you to meet; our larger-than-life pantomime dame, Hyacinth Horseradish, who is as colourful as she is green-fingered, the wonderfully wise Sage the Owl (he's a hoot!), and Prince Rapsallion's straight-laced companion, Sir Stephen, whom Hyacinth soon sets within her sights.

"I'm incredibly proud of this show and my fantastic cast have all



The cast of *Rapunzel and the Rascal Prince*. From left, Gill Peeling, Andy Walsh, Kay Andrews-Kuhn, Katy Roberts, Gerri Dobson-Magee and Thalia Gray

worked so hard to bring it to life. I can't wait for audiences to see it. "You'd be mad to miss this wicked (that's good wicked, not bad wicked) show."

Tickets are £8 for concessions and £10 for adults. Family tickets and group bookings (10+ tickets) are also available. Evening performance are at 7.30pm and

there is a matinee performance at 2.30pm on Saturday, December 3. To book tickets, visit www.lyndenplayers.com or call 07849 062739.

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Accountant doesn't add up

THE ACCOUNTANT (15, 128 mins)
Thriller/Action/Romance. Ben Affleck, Anna Kendrick, JK Simmons, Cynthia Addai-Robinson, Jon Bernthal, John Lithgow, Robert C Treveiler, Seth Lee. Director: Gavin O'Connor

IN 1998, childhood friends Ben Affleck and Matt Damon excitedly clutched Academy Awards for Best Original Screenplay for *Good Will Hunting*, an emotionally rich drama about a mathematics genius, who works as a janitor.

Their subsequent acting careers have followed different trajectories.

Damon has been a lynchpin in the Ocean's Eleven and Jason Bourne franchises, and worked on numerous awards-worthy projects including *Saving Private Ryan*, *The Talented Mr Ripley*, *The Departed*, *Invictus*, *Interstellar* and *The Martian*.

By contrast, Affleck squandered his talents in *Pearl Harbor*, *Daredevil* and *Gigli* and only enjoyed a renaissance in front of the camera when he began honing his craft as a director with *Gone Baby Gone* and *The Town*, culminating in his Best Picture win for *Argo*.

In the sharp-shooting thriller *The Accountant*, Affleck attempts to muscle in on Damon's status as a tormented assassin by playing an autistic number cruncher, who is equally gifted with his fists and a rifle.

Think *Good Will Hunting* meets Jason Bourne, without the finesse or nervous energy of those pictures.

Christian Wolff (Affleck) meticulously investigates embezzlement, insider trading and other financial irregularities in criminal enterprises.

He works alone and is ruthless in his pursuit of wrongdoing.

The Treasury Department, led by soon-to-retire financial crimes director, Raymond King (JK Simmons), is determined to expose Wolff as the shadowy

figure called The Accountant. King blackmails ambitious analyst Marybeth Medina (Cynthia Addai-Robinson) into following the evidence trail and confirming Wolff's involvement.

Meanwhile, Wolff is hired by Lamar Blackburn (John Lithgow), long-serving CEO of Living Robotics, to verify the findings of a perky in-house accountant, Dana Cummings (Anna Kendrick), who alleges more than 60 million dollars of company funds have gone astray.

The Accountant is a slick, engrossing romp that uses the lead character's developmental disability as a hook for cheap yet satisfying thrills.

Screenwriter Bill Dubuque cooks the books with lazy action thriller clichés but has great fun disguising the conventional checks and balances.

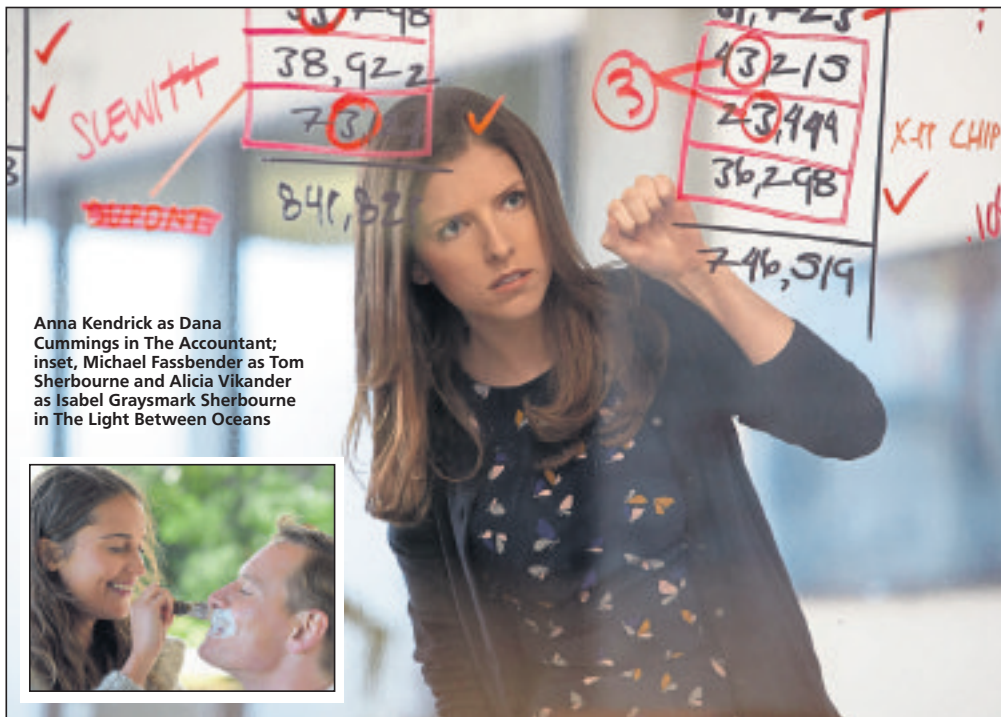
There are several key deposits in the entertainment column: Affleck's measured performance as an anti-social assassin incapable of forging close personal ties; Simmons' meaty supporting turn; a mosaic of flashbacks to adolescence when Chris' military officer father (Robert C Treveiler) pushes his son (Seth Lee) past breaking point; and testosterone-fuelled fight sequences.

Kendrick's disappointingly lightweight damsel in distress is a sizeable deduction, and a major plot revelation is both contrived and improbable.

THE LIGHT BETWEEN OCEANS (12A, 133 mins) **Drama/Romance. Michael Fassbender, Alicia Vikander, Rachel Weisz, Bryan Brown, Jack Thompson, Leon Ford, Caren Pistorius. Director: Derek Cianfrance**

AS A genre, the sweeping romance is one that's been overlooked in recent years, so there is much excitement about *The Light Between Oceans*, an adaptation of the 2012 bestselling novel by M.L. Steadman.

On paper, the film has everything you expect; beautiful



Anna Kendrick as Dana Cummings in *The Accountant*; inset, Michael Fassbender as Tom Sherbourne and Alicia Vikander as Isabel Graysmark Sherbourne in *The Light Between Oceans*

lead actors in Michael Fassbender and Alicia Vikander, stunning backdrops and a period setting.

It even has the all-important moral dilemmas and tragic twist, but somehow I just wasn't left reaching for the tissues.

It's set shortly after the First World War and follows Tom Sherbourne (Fassbender), a man seeking a peaceful existence after his horrific experiences on the front line.

You're never quite wrapped up in Tom and Isabel's world and for that reason the climactic scenes lack oomph.

Combine that with a plot that teeters on the preposterous and you're left with a pleasant but not tear-jerking two hours.

Cake Bookworm

Autumn by Ali Smith is published in hardback by Hamish Hamilton, priced £16.99 (ebook £9.99)

BREXIT has landed and there is a nastiness in the air. Incendiary remarks by politicians about immigrants go unremarked and people talk without really communicating.

Elisabeth is an art lecturer on a casual contract who is living the dream ('if the dream means having no job security and almost everything being too expensive to do and that you're still in the same rented flat you had when you were a student').

As a child, and much against the wishes of her narrow-minded mum, she had befriended their neighbour Mr Gluck. He is the Other in many ways – old, perhaps gay, artistic, male, foreign – but he taught her to see the world anew. He's now about 100 years old and Elisabeth keeps vigil by his bedside as he

sleeps the long sleep of the slowly dying.

Smith takes us inside his unfurling mind too. It is tempting to see Gluck as continental Europe and mum as suspicious Little England, but then this ever-shifting narrative shifts shape once again. Mum takes a gay lover and Elisabeth – in defiance of the prevailing disdain for people's personal histories – discovers a forgotten (and real) female Pop Artist, Pauline Boty. Confused? Intrigued? Though it is composed of individual elements that flow delightfully by, often in deft comic dialogue, the overall shape of *Autumn* is less easy to take in. But this is not to criticise. It's the sort of book you could read several times and notice new things every time.

The Whistler by John Grisham is published in hardback by Hodder & Stoughton, priced £20 (ebook £13.99)

THE Board of Judicial Conduct

normally has nothing more taxing to do than look into the affairs of judges who should have retired years before. Investigators Lacy and Hugo are usually occupied by complaints of sexual harassment or drunkenness at the bench. But when a confidential informant points the finger at a judge who turns out to be America's most corrupt, linked to a secretive gang of murdering criminals, the consequences quickly spin out of their control. As they are drawn into a world of corrupt casino owners and shady property developers, the stakes suddenly become much higher. In *The Whistler*, John Grisham brings together all of the shady sectors of the Florida underworld as the FBI and other government agencies line up to land the prize catch of a major crime boss and his cohorts. Grisham once again proves he is a master of legal fiction and is set to add to his legion of fans.

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Oxfordshire Listings

Events

THURSDAY

Abingdon Anglo-German Club: The Abbey Chapel, Checker Walk, Abingdon. A Garden Of Delights: Depictions of Paradise by Dr Jon Whiteley, Hon Curator, Department of Western Art, Ashmolean Museum. 7.30pm. £7. 01235 533887.

Art Classes: Standlake Village Hall, Rack End, Standlake. Painting with watercolours and mixed media. Beginners or improvers. 10am. 07917 361296.

Film: Abingdon Health and Wellbeing Centre, Audlett Drive, Abingdon. *The Wonders (Le Meraviglie)*, 107 mins, It/ Switz/Ger, 2014, Cert 15. In the beautiful Etruscan countryside a family strives to make a living from their bee-keeping. Filmed in a dreamlike style evoking a largely bygone era, the story is told through the eyes of Gelsomina, the eldest daughter, who becomes enchanted with a crew in search of rural businesses to film for a reality TV show. 7.30pm. £6. 01235 521976.

Fireworks Display: Middle Barton School, School Lane Playing Field, Middle Barton. £5 adult, £3 children or family for £15. 6pm.

Ramblers walk: Between church and pub, Bledlow. Undulating six-mile walk via Lodge Hill with a pub stop at the end. 10am. 01844 213467.

Shelf Life with John Sergeant: The Story Museum, 42 Pembroke Street, Oxford. The Oxford-born political journalist, broadcaster and *Strictly Come Dancing* star talks to Nicolette Jones about the books he grew up with and what's currently on his bookshelf. 6.30pm. £10/£8. 01865 790050.

The Making of The Ridgeway Landscapes: Vale & Downland Museum, 19 Church Street, Wantage. A talk by Eric Jones, co-author of *Middle Ridgeway & Its Environment* (2016). 7pm. £5. 01235 771447.

FRIDAY

Hanborough Musical Fireworks: The Pavilion, Roosevelt Road, Long Hanborough. Fairground, barbecue, mulled wine. Gates open at 6pm and display at 7.15pm. £4 adult, £2 child. 07463 851556.

Kidlington Fireworks Display: Stratfield Brake Recreation Ground, Frieze Way, Kidlington. Barbecue and hot drinks being provided by Gosford Rugby Club. 6pm. 01865 373691.

Seeds of Hope: St Swithun's Church, Kennington Road, Kennington. Helen Hawari will be addressing an open meeting of Kennington, Refugee Welcome with an illustrated account of her experience as a volunteer in Greece during the summer. 8pm. Free. 01865 735590.

SATURDAY

Awesome Autumn! Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum, Park Street, Woodstock. Active games, technical challenges and craft. 1-3.30pm. Ages six to 10. £7. Booking essential. 01993 810 214.

Bonfire and Fireworks: Standlake Village Hall, Rack End, Standlake. Standlake and Cokethorpe Sea Scouts annual bonfire and fireworks. Gates open at 6pm, fireworks at 7pm. Barbecue and bar. Live music. 6pm. Adults £4, children £2, family £10. 07767 796071.

Bonfire Night Firewalk Family Event: The Nags Head Pub, The Bridge, Abingdon. You will receive full training to complete your challenge. Plus hog roast, glitter tattoos and take home an 'I survived' T-shirt. Help support Children's Brain Tumour Charity. See www.blueskyethinking.org/firewalk/ 5pm. From £20. 07795 485549.

Changing Fashions In Silver: The Oxfordshire Museum, Park Street, Woodstock. Michael Welch, senior valuer from Bonhams, will speak about the changing fashions in silverware design. £8. 2.30pm.

Christmas Bazaar and Craft Fair: Witney Methodist Church Hall, 40 High Street, Witney. For Guide Dogs for the Blind. 10am-4pm. Free.

Drop-in Drawing Hour: Vale & Downland Museum, Church Street, Wantage. Artist Vicky Vergou will be running two free drop-in drawing sessions for all ages. 11am. Free but donations welcome. 01235 771447.

Little Milton Fireworks: The Pine Lodge, Thame Road, Little Milton. Bar open 6pm. Fireworks 6.30pm. Hot dogs and soup. Tickets available a: Little Milton shop or on the door. See <http://www.littlemiltonvillagehall.org.uk/> £5, child £3, family £15.

Nixie Fizzy Firework Fun: The Story Museum, 42 Pembroke Street, Oxford. Help launch Cas Lester's latest book in which Nixie the Bad Bad Fairy uses her unpredictable wand to create firework fun for boys and girls. Followed by book signing. Ages five to eight. 2pm. £7/£5. 01865 790050.

Ramblers walk: Lambert Hotel, Aston Rowant. 7½-mile walk via Aston wood. 10am. 07904 276243.

Walk (Fieldpaths): Village Hall Car Park, Tiddington. SP648051 6.1 miles. A figure-of-eight walk through Fernhill Wood to Albury church, along the Oxfordshire Way to Rycote, returning via Thame Valley Walk. Bring refreshments for en route break. Assistance dogs only. 10.10am. 07914 183394.

SUNDAY

Morning guided walk: Watercress Centre, The Street, Ewelme. 10.30am. £3 per adult and free for accompanied children.

Flea Market and Collectors Fair: Island Farm Donkey Sanctuary, Old Didcot Road, Brightwell-cum-Sotwell, Wallingford. 10am. Buyers entry 50p. 01491 833938.

Second Lease Walks: Car Park, Woodford Way, Witney. Two walks, a nine-mile walk taking in Notgrove, Cold Aston, Turkdean and Hazelton. The second, a five-mile walk in South Leigh, Tar Wood. 9.30am. 01993 774500.

Walk (Fieldpaths): Village Green, Bledington. SP244227 6.25 miles. A circular walk taking in Icomb and the Westcotes with a small section of road walking. Bring refreshments for en route break, pub at end of walk. Assistance dogs only. 10am. 01865 373366.

MONDAY

Banbury Floral Art: Blessed George Napier School, Springfield Avenue, Banbury. Floral Art demonstration by Lee Berrill with the theme 'Deck the Halls'. Refreshments, raffle and stalls. 7.30pm. £8. 01295 253891.

Charity Christmas Card Sale: Vale & Downland Museum, Church Street, Wantage. 9.30am. Free. 01235 771447.

TUESDAY

Jewellery Making – earrings: No Two Things, 120 Broadway, Didcot. 7.30pm. £18. 01235 511550.

Natural History Talk: The Community Centre, New Road, Woodstock. Ellen Lee, 'Others'. For the Woodstock Natural History Society. 7.30pm. Non-members £2. 01993 812004.

Ramblers walk: By the Church, Bledlow. Leisurely four-mile walk via Skittle Green, Henton and Lower Wainhill with a pub stop at the end. 10am. 01844 352438.

WEDNESDAY

Cotswold Decorative & Fine Arts Society: Village Hall, Bradwell Village, Burford. Lars Sharp speaking on

To get an event of any kind listed here, enter the details into our easy-to-use online database at thisisoxfordshire.co.uk/events

Please add your event no later than ten days before the day of publication.

'Hogarh, Harlots, Rakes and Crashing China'. 11am. Non-members welcome (suggested donation £8).

Harwell WI: Orchard Hall, High Street, Harwell. Laura Godfrey from Age UK Oxfordshire demonstrating gentle dance exercises. 7.30pm. 01235 835649.

Oxfordshire on the Home Front 1914-1918: Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum, Park Street, Woodstock. Stephen Barker's talk will explain about the impact of the war in the towns and countryside. It will focus upon fundraising and charitable events, munitions production, recruitment, the effects upon women and children, the fear of invasion, the influx of Belgian refugees and many other themes. 6.45pm. £10. 01993 810213.

Oxfordshire Railway Society: Seacourt Day Centre, Seacourt Road, Botley. The Locomotives of the Great Western Railway and the GW & Great Central Line, an illustrated talk by author Brian Stephenson. 7.30pm. £3.

Walk (Fieldpaths): Church, Stoke Lyne. SP566283 5 miles. Meet at Stoke Lyne church. A circular walk via Sheep Walk, Tismore Park and Hardwick. Bring refreshments for en route break. Assistance dogs only. 10am. 07799 001899.

Music

THURSDAY

Harris Manchester College, Mansfield Road, Oxford: Quintetssentially Brass. A quintet from Oxford University Brass Band play a varied programme. Free, with retiring collection. 1.30pm. 01865 271006.

Holywell Music Room, Holywell Street, Oxford: In Golden Evening Light: exploring music for voice, cello and piano. Contralto Cara Curran, cellist Madeleine Ridd and pianist Melanie Jones. Free admission. 8.15pm.

Jacqueline du Pré Music Building, St Hilda's College, Oxford: Lunchtime Recital: Phoebe Potter, Hannah Marchant and Carson Becke. Clarinet trios by Beethoven and Brahms. Free. 1.15pm. 01865 286660.

Unicorn Theatre, Checker Walk, Abingdon: Charlotte Campbell. Singer-songwriter. 7pm. £12.

Academy, 190 Cowley Road, Oxford: Dance Gavin Dance, Good Tiger, Jonny Craig, Kurt Travis. Californian experimental post-hardcore band. 7pm. £12. O2

The Wheatsheaf, 129 High Street, Oxford: Martin Speake. The Spin Jazz Club. Jazz saxophonist accompanied by The Spin Trio. 8.30pm. £10, £8 (conc), £6 (student).

The Bullingdon, 162 Cowley Road, Oxford: Tigercub and guests. Brighton pop-bunkers. 7pm. £7 adv, MOTD.

FRIDAY

Berinsfield SC, Green Furlong, Berinsfield: Doug and Dan. Rock and pop. 9pm. 07770 899859.

Holywell Music Room, Holywell Street, Oxford: Thomas Strönen: Time is A Blind Guide. All-acoustic Anglo-Norwegian group. £17 (£12 concession). 7.30pm. 01865 305305.

The Angel, Market Square, Witney: Pete McCray. Soul and reggae. Free. 9pm. 01993 703238.

The Bullingdon, Cowley Road, Oxford: Audioscope16 – Nought and

more. Raising money for homelessness charity Shelter. With Naught, Tomaga, Ben Duvall and a special performance of Rhys Chatham's *Guitar Trio* by a one-off group including members of Ride and Young Knives. Find out more <http://audioscope.co.uk> £7. 7pm.

James Street Tavern, 47-48 James Street, Oxford: Baxter Currie, Mark Atherton & Friends, Missing Persians. 8pm. Free.

The Wheatsheaf, 129 High Street, Oxford: Chasing Daylight, Head Of Steam, Cora Pearl, Mr G & Rich. 8.15pm. £5.

O2 Academy Oxford, 190 Cowley Road, Oxford: Hidden Charms, The Vnyl Society, The Neon Violets. 6.30pm. £8.

Linacre College, St Cross Road, Oxford: Uusikuu. Vintage Finnish Tango quintet. 8pm. £10/£8 conc.

SATURDAY

Marston Royal British Legion, Hadow Road, Marston: Lee Rivers. Covers. Free. 8pm. 01865 243991.

The Story Museum, 42 Pembroke Street, Oxford: Nick Cope's Song Book. Music gigs for children and families. £5/£3. 10.30am. 01865 790050.

Tingewick Hall, John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford: Radcliffe Orchestra in concert. In aid of Oxfordshire Cruse Bereavement Care. £10 / £8 (conc) under 16 free. 8pm. 01865 245398.

Victoria Arms, Mill Lane, Old Marston: KingB Blues Band. 9pm. 01865 241382.

O2 Academy Oxford, 190 Cowley Road, Oxford: Leader, Club Drive, Additives, Delirium. Local pop-rock quintet. 6pm. £8.50.

SUNDAY

Sheldonian Theatre, Broad Street, Oxford: Berlioz Symphonie Fantastique. Oxford University Orchestra conducted by Daniel Harding with soloist Carolin Widmann. £15-£30. 7.30pm. 07826 353761.

St Barnabas Church, Cardigan Street, Oxford: The Marian Consort with actor Finbar Lynch directed by Rory McCleery. The life and music of composer Carlo Gesualdo including extracts from his Tenebrae Responsories and a selection of his madrigals. £15-30. 7.30pm.

St Nicolas' Church, Market Place, Abingdon: Lyric Piano Trio. Elisabeth Reed, Coral Lancaster, Eppie Churcher. £10 (£9). 3pm. 07775 904626.

Wolfson College, Linton Road, Oxford: Piano Recital: Susana Gómez Vázquez. £10/£8/£5 (students) including refreshments. 5pm. 01865 274100.

O2 Academy Oxford, 190 Cowley Road, Oxford: Alien Ant Farm, (Hed) P.E., Sumo Cyco. Nu-metal heavyweights. 7.30pm. £17.50.

Rose & Crown, North Parade, Oxford: Mike Wilkins Duo. Jazz. 7pm. Free.

MONDAY

The Library Pub, 182 Cowley Road, Oxford: Uranium Club, Lucy Leave, Grub. Punk. 7.30pm. Free (£3 suggested donation).

TUESDAY

O2 Academy Oxford, 190 Cowley Road, Oxford: Ren Harvieu & Romeo Stodart, The Goat Roper Rodeo Band,

Joe Dolman. Magic Numbers frontman with Salford singing sensation. 7pm. £13.

WEDNESDAY

The Talkhouse, Wheatley Road, Stanton St John: Jazz with singer Atila, Tim Laphorn on piano, Nathan Allen on drums and Tim Dawes on double bass. 8.30-11pm. Free. 01865 351654.

The Queen's College Chapel, High Street, Oxford: The Eglesfield Musical Society Wednesday Organ Recital Series. Richard Vendome. Admissionfree with a retiring collection. 1.10pm. 01865 279120.

The Jericho Tavern, 56 Walton Street, Oxford: Art Theefe, The Temper Cartel and Quartermelon. 8pm. £5.

The Bear, 6 Alfred Street, Oxford: Patrick Amos. 9pm. Free.

O2 Academy Oxford, 190 Cowley Road, Oxford: Three Trapped Tigers, The Physics House Band. Psychedelic prog trio. 6.30pm. £11.

Theatre

Burton Taylor Studio, Beaumont Street, Oxford: Nov 1-5, *The Trojan Women*. 7.30pm. £6 (£5). Nov 1-5, *Three Women*. 9.30pm. £6 (£5). 01865 305305.

Glee Club, Hythe Bridge Street, Oxford: Nov 4, *Paul Foot. Tis A Pity She's A Piglet*. 7pm. Minimum age 16. £13. 0871 472 04007.

Oxford Playhouse, Beaumont Street, Oxford: Nov 2-5, *The Nether*. 7.30pm. £11.50-£19. Nov 4, *Sonnet Remix*. In Shakespeare's 400th anniversary year Live Canon invited 154 poets to write new poems in response to the Bard's 154 sonnets. 5pm. Nov 8, *Let All the People Rejoice*. 7.30pm. £14 to £22. £9. Nov 9, *Gasp!* Two young men compete in a game of physical endurance in this original circus show. 7.30pm. £11.50 to £18. 01865 305305.

Pegasus Theatre, Magdalen Road, Oxford: Nov 4-5, *An Elephant in the Garden*. Adapted by Simon Read from Michael Morpurgo's best-selling novel. 7pm. £9 (£6 concessions). 01865 812150.

New Theatre, George Street, Oxford: Until Nov 5, *Ghost*. Various times. £14.90-£51.40 plus £2.85 transaction fee. Nov 7-12, *The Shawshank Redemption*. Starring Paul Nicholls. 7.30pm plus 2.30pm Wed and Sat. £16.90-£39.40 plus £4 transaction fee. 0844 871 7615.

The Story Museum, 42 Pembroke Street, Oxford: Nov 6, *TV Tales for Tinies: Rastamouse. Join Michael De Souza, the creator and author of TV favourite, Rastamouse*, for storytelling rhythm and rhymes. Followed by book signing. 2pm. £7/£5. 01865 790050.

The North Wall Arts Centre, South Parade, Oxford: Nov 4, *Harrogate*. By Al Smith. 8pm. £14 (£12 concession). Nov 5, *Simon Munnelly: Standing Still*. British Comedy Award nominee. 8pm. £14 (£12 concession). Nov 6, *Carousing With Shakespeare*. Enjoy an evening of poetry, laughter and music. 7.30pm. £15 (£10 concession). 01865 319450.

Cornerstone, Station Road, Didcot: Nov 6, *Your Toys*. Bring your real toys to life on stage using puppetry, live music and humour. 2pm. £8 (£6). 01235 515144.

Village Hall, 7 Queen Street, Dorchester on Thames: Nov 3-4, *Aladdin The Panto*. Dorchester Amateur Dramatics Society (DADS). See www.dads.org.uk Children (under 12) £7, adults £10. 01865 340792.

School Hall, Alchester Road, Chesterton: Nov 4, Theatre and Supper evening. Two one-act comedy plays with supper. *The Trouble with Harry and Last Tango in Chesterton*. 7.30pm. £8. 01869 241581.

CakeSport

banburycake.co.uk/sport

Inconsistency frustrates Ford

Banbury knocked out of Trophy by lower-league Cleeve

MIKE Ford called on his side to sharpen up their act following a shock 1-0 defeat at home to Bishops Cleeve in the first qualifying round of the Buildbase FA Trophy on Saturday, writes Matthew Bruce.

The Puritans were unable to find a way past Cleeve goalkeeper Matt Wiecek and were made to pay by the Evo-Stik Southern League Division 1 South & West visitors.

Jacob Davidge headed home the 77th-minute winner to stun the Premier Division side.

And the United boss was not pleased with the manner of his side's exit from the competition.

"I'm getting frustrated losing games of football we should never be losing," said Ford.

"It's not just once or twice it's

FOOTBALL

happened, it's four or five times.

"We should still be in the FA Trophy, we should have been in the fourth qualifying round of the FA Cup and we should be higher than we are in the league."

After seeing his side's winless run extended to three games, and failing to keep a clean sheet for the ninth successive match, Ford insisted the Puritans need to be harder to beat.

He said: "We actually played quite well on Saturday, but their goalkeeping was magnificent and we didn't defend well enough."

"I have no problems with the performance overall, but I think we're just too easy to defend against."

"The ball is in the players' court. Do they want to be a side who raise their game against the big sides and get the odd result, or do they want to do it consistently?"

On Saturday, Cleeve created the first real opening when Ben Hayes somehow failed to turn the ball in at the far post following Jack Watts's cross.

But Banbury's Conor McDonagh, George Nash and George Jeacock were all denied by Wiecek.

The visitors started the second period brighter and went close to opening the scoring when Paul Holmes rattled a post.

And it was Cleeve who stole victory with 13 minutes remaining as Davidge's header hit a post and found its way past Jack Harding.



Winger Carl Daniels tries to find a gap in the Oxford Harlequins defence during Banbury's 19-13 defeat at Marston Ferry Road
Picture: David Fleming

Bulls suffer derby blues at Quins

BANBURY were forced to settle for a losing bonus point in suffering a 19-13 defeat at local rivals Oxford Harlequins in South West 1 East.

Despite two Ed Phillips penalties, Bulls trailed 7-6

RUGBY UNION

at the break after Will Roberts' converted try for Quins.

Banbury hit back as centre Jack Briggs raced

over and Phillips converted.

But the hosts went on to secure victory as Matt Edney burrowed over, before Jenner, who converted the first, touched down.

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ARIES Mar 21-Apr 19

Spend some time planning your future this week. Your thinking is clear and it will be easy for you to work out a successful game plan. New attractions make for a fun filled weekend, leaving you with plenty to smile about. Ring now for a full reading.

0906 585 4360

LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

Your confidence is given a boost by new faces who make you feel special. You were living a life of routine and habit, but that is broken over the coming days by some really exciting characters. Ring now to hear why it's worth filling in forms again.

0906 585 4366

TAURUS Apr 20-May 20

Things didn't go exactly to plan last week. You did learn a lot about what close ones can offer to your future though. You see what you need to do to ensure things are tied up to your satisfaction. Ring now to hear why you need to be careful of paying for debts that aren't yours.

0906 585 4361

SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

News on someone you used to have to live with for sees you feeling nostalgic. You start to realise how much a certain person and situation taught you. Fellow Scorpions link to solo business ventures which have success written all over them. Ring now for a romantic revelation.

0906 585 4367

GEMINI May 21-Jun 20

Try to think outside the box this week and you will soon see that solving any problems is easy. Emotions got the better of you last weekend, but this week you all start to work together again as a team. Ring now to make the most of life and love.

0906 585 4362

SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21

Stop looking at who to blame and focus on moving on with your life. Why let the past drag you back when the future has so much to offer. You're a calmer soul than the one who entered November. Ring now to hear which sign I think is responsible for this.

0906 585 4368

CANCER Jun 21-Jul 22

Careful of telling lies, as it is clear from this week's line up that they can and will come back on you. Knowing who you can and can't trust in the family will help you to work out who you can share new personal information with. Ring now for an extraordinary love prediction.

0906 585 4363

CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

Happy times link to you at last doing what you want, instead of what family have pressured you into. For a moment last month I was losing you, but you're back and stronger and more determined than ever to be the very best version of you. Ring now for clear vision.

0906 585 4369

LEO Jul 23-Aug 22

You may be upset with a close one for not telling the truth, but the stars tell me that they really feel they did not have much of a choice. Pisceans link to a better social life which is opening up for you over the coming weeks. Ring now to hear how romance brings revelations.

0906 585 4364

AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

Try to give thoughtful advice when asked questions by those around you. You may not realise it, but the stars are casting you in a really wise light which will make others gravitate towards your guidance and insight. Ring now to hear how your house of love spells mischief.

0906 585 4370

VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

You have not been putting yourself first my friend. If you don't think you're worthy of a break then why should anyone else? Too much time talking about other's lives has stopped you from putting energy into your own. Ring now so that I can help you to change this fact.

0906 585 4365

PISCES Feb 19-Mar 20

You no longer think what if, but you think how and when. Your element of water makes it possible for you to second guess what others will do next. This also enables you to make the best professional and financial deals this week. Ring now to reveal all.

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The five-bedroom detached house in Adderbury; top right, the Twyford 1920s house; right, Twyford Fields

Gill Oliver
goliver@nqo.com

YELLOW-stone cottages and rolling countryside mean North Oxfordshire is a popular choice for families and those looking for a place to retire. With Banbury, Deddington, Woodstock and Chipping Norton all within easy reach, its location is a big draw. Road links are excellent thanks to M40 junctions 10 and 11 and there are mainline rail links via Banbury, Bicester North, Oxford Parkway and Charlbury to Marylebone and Paddington. Mark Long, of Deddington-based estate agents Mark David, said: "North Oxfordshire encapsulates all that is English about the coun-

Rolling countryside right for families and retirees

tryside that surrounds it, with its rolling undulating open countryside and yellow-stone cottages. "It provides those who have been used to city living copious amounts of charm and character, in contrast to the flat countryside of South Oxfordshire." He added: "The majority of small villages or hamlets are within easy reach of larger conurbations that provide an excellent mix of shops, schools, pubs and restaurants. It is a wonderful location to settle down and retire, or raise a growing family."

One of the most popular villages is Adderbury, which includes a shop, Post Office, hotel, three pubs, a hairdressers, library, golf club, recreation ground and church. Mark David is marketing a double-fronted, stone-built five-bedroom detached house in Adderbury. With a sitting room, study, dining room and kitchen/breakfast room, it comes with front and back gardens plus a double garage and is priced at £700,000. Another family home is a four-bedroom, detached property with views across open countryside in the nearby hamlet of Twyford. It includes a study, sitting room with feature fireplace, conservatory, dining room, games conserva-

tory and a kitchen/breakfast room. It is on the market at £595,000. Another attractive property in Twyford is an extended four-bedroom 1920's home on a large plot. It includes a sitting room, snug/office and open-plan kitchen/breakfast room. It is on the market at £585,000. For more information, contact Mark David on 01869 338898 or see mark-david.co.uk

Contact property writer Gill Oliver with your stories on 01865 425475 or email propertyedit@nqo.com



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A new to the market well presented spacious two bedroom apartment within walking distance to the town centre and train station. Master bedroom with ensuite. Second family bathroom. Allocated parking.

Asking Price Of 160,000



Bedford Close

Martin & Co Banbury are please to present this excellent one bedroom house situated in a fantastic location within Banbury. This would make an ideal investment or the perfect first time home. Call today to book your viewing 01295 701773

Asking Price Of 160,000



Beech House

Immaculate 2 double bedroom apartment. Open plan lounge/diner kitchen. En-suite to master bedroom. Separate bathroom. Balcony. Allocated parking

Asking Price Of 180,000



Ivy Cottage

A new to the market spacious two bedroom cottage situated in the heart of the village of North Newington. There is a separate kitchen; good size lounge with all original features. Upstairs there are two bedrooms and a family size bathroom. Parking is on road. The property also benefits from a picturesque garden. Situated with easy access for Banbury and Bloxham. Walking distance to the local primary school. EPC Rating G

£250,000



Kings Way

A spacious 4 bedroom semi detached home situated in the south of Banbury. The property comprises entrance hall, lounge, dining room, recently fitted kitchen diner and cloak room. Upstairs there are four generous bedrooms with ensuite bathroom to the master and separate family bathroom. Outside benefits from ample off road parking, garage, front and rear gardens. IN THE REAR GARDEN THERE IS A BRICK BUILT UNIT IDEAL FOR AN ANNEX CONVERSION OR HOME OFFICE

Asking Price Of 320,000



The Rockies

Nestled on the fringes of the pretty hamlet of Fencott, not far from the banks of the River Ray, is The Rockies, a picture perfect thatched cottage that is believed to date back to the 1650s. The Rockies is a grade 2 listed detached home blending timeless character with up to date conveniences.

Asking Price Of 850,000



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19 Fergusson Road

Martin & Co are pleased to present a new to the market well presented three bedroom spacious property situated within walking distance to the town centre and train station. The property comprises entrance hall; living room; kitchen and living room; cloakroom with WC. Upstairs there are three bedrooms comprising two doubles with fitted wardrobes and one small room. The property also benefits from off road parking; a large rear enclosed garden; shed for storage and loft access. There is double glazing; gas central heating and the property has recently had new carpets. Available immediately unfurnished. EPC Rating: F

£895



30 Ivatt Walk

Martin & Co are pleased to present a spacious two bedroom maisonette available unfurnished. The property comprises: entrance hall; fully fitted kitchen with cooker; washing machine and fridge freezer; good size living room; upstairs there are two double bedrooms and bathroom with bath and shower; separate WC. The property has allocated parking and is conveniently situated within walking distance to the town centre and train station. EPC Rating C.

£745



flat 4 Dorita House

Martin & Co are pleased to offer this new to the market spacious one bedroom flat available within walking distance to the town centre and train station. The property comprises: entrance hall, living room, kitchen, bedroom and separate bathroom. It is unfurnished, neutrally decorated throughout. The property benefits from allocated parking. EPC rating D

£595



6 Blenheim Rise

Martin and Co Banbury are pleased to offer to the market, this two bedroom semi-detached property in the sought after village of Kings Sutton. The property comprises; Lounge, kitchen, two double bedrooms, family bathroom, and enclosed rear garden and off road parking with garage. Ideal for family or professionals. EPC - D

£825



Twyford
Available Now

- Detached Bungalow
- Fully Refurbished
- Neutral Decor
- Beautiful Garden
- Long Term Let
- Pets Considered



Temple Herdewyke
Available Now

- 2 double bedrooms
- Laminate flooring
- Log burner
- Allocated parking
- Immaculate!



Banbury
Available November

- Immaculate
- 2 Double Bedrooms
- Lounge / Diner
- Seated Patio Area
- Enclosed Private Rear Garden



Milcombe
Available 1st November

- Village Location
- End Terrace
- Two Double Bedrooms
- Open Plan living
- Garden



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Banbury
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- Two Bedroom
- Immaculate Condition
- Lounge/Diner
- Kitchen
- Long Term



Banbury
MORE REQUIRED

- Semi- Detached
- 3 Bedrooms
- Off Road Parking
- Kitchen/Diner



Banbury
MORE REQUIRED

- Fully Refurbished
- One Bedroom Terrace
- New Kitchen Area
- New Bathroom
- Fully Redecorated
- Town Centre Location



Banbury
MORE REQUIRED

- Cottage
- Two Bedroom
- Pets Considered
- Gardens
- Quiet Area

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- Executive Detached
- Cul-De-Sac Location
- Master Bedroom En-Suite
- Suite
- Three Further Bedrooms
- Three Reception Rooms



Banbury **£275,000**
BEAUTIFULLY PRESENTED

- Four Bedrooms
- Large Kitchen/Diner
- Lounge
- Refurbished throughout
- Garage and Driveway



Banbury **£239,950**
SIMILAR REQUIRED

- Semi-Detached
- Three Bedrooms
- Lounge
- Kitchen/Diner
- Garage
- Driveway



Banbury **£325,000**
EXCELLENT PLOT

- Poets Corner
- Four Bedrooms
- Two Reception Rooms
- Master En-Suite
- Garage and Driveway
- Beautiful Gardens



Thorpe Mandeville **£235,000**
GARDENERS DREAM

- Stone Cottage
- Village Location
- Two Bedrooms
- Good Gardens



Banbury **£375,000**
TIMMS ESTATE

- Detached Bungalow
- Three Bedrooms
- Three Reception Rooms
- En-suite
- Gardens
- Garage and Driveway



Banbury **£270,000**
CLOSE TO PEOPLES PARK

- Period Property
- Three Bedrooms
- Two Reception Rooms
- Large Garden
- Desirable Location



Moreton Pinkey **£325,000**
A MUST SEE HOME

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- Three Bedrooms
- Kitchen/Family Room
- Village Location
- Master Bedroom En-suite

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Milcombe **£165,000**
SIMILAR REQUIRED

- Maisonette
- Two Double Bedrooms
- Lounge
- Kitchen
- Bathroom
- Off Road Parking



Banbury **£245,000**
SIMILAR REQUIRED

- Period Property
- Close Proximity to Town Centre
- Two Reception Rooms
- Three Bedrooms
- Refitted Kitchen

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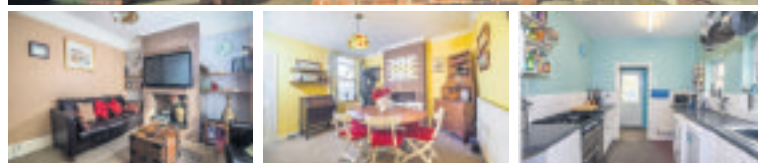
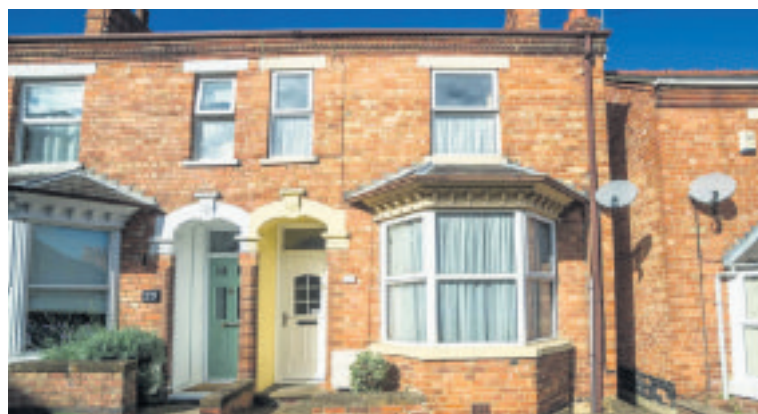
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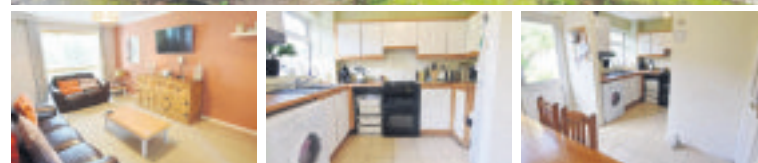
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**Grosvenor Road****Offers Over £220,000**

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**Sussex Drive****Guide Price £215,000**

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**Nursery Drive****Guide Price £279,950**

WELL PRESENTED THREE BEDROOM SEMI DETACHED PROPERTY LOCATED ON A CORNER PLOT IN THIS SOUGHT AFTER LOCATION. This lovely family home has been well maintained by the current owners and in brief the accommodation comprises: Entrance porch, Entrance hall, Kitchen Diner, Living room, Three bedrooms, Bathroom and Separate WC. The property benefits from gas central heating and double glazing throughout with good sized gardens to the front, rear and side of the property. The driveway at the front has ample parking for up to three cars. The property is ideally situated within easy walking distance of the town centre. Internal viewing of this great family home is highly recommended.

**Waltham Gardens****Offers In The Region Of £300,000**

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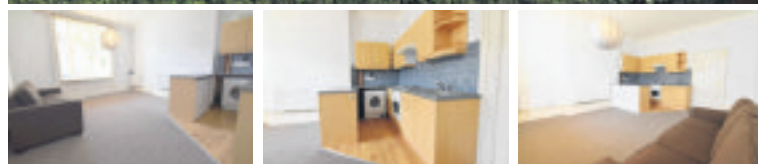
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**Powys Grove****Guide Price £349,950**

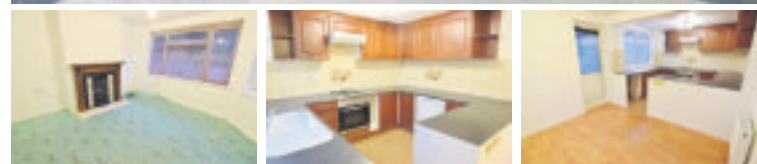
WE ARE DELIGHTED TO BRING TO THE MARKET THIS WELL PRESENTED SPACIOUS FOUR BEDROOM DETACHED HOME SITUATED IN THE CORNER OF THIS QUIET CUL DE SAC. This property has been extended to the rear to offer more space on the ground floor with a good size lounge, family room, Kitchen and downstairs WC. The first floor comprises of two double bedrooms one with en-suite, two further bedrooms and a family bathroom.

**West Bar Street****Offers Over £240,000**

THIS WELL PRESENTED LATE VICTORIAN THREE BEDROOM TOWN HOUSE LOCATED CLOSE TO THE TOWN CENTRE OF BANBURY. This property is set across three floors and consists of Two reception rooms with feature fireplaces, kitchen with double doors to a rear enclosed patio area, downstairs wc/wet room with shower and a cellar. To the first floor there are two double bedrooms and on the second floor a further double bedroom and large family bathroom. Offered with no onward chain it makes an ideal buy for either first time buyers or investors.

**Calthorpe Road****Offers Over £140,000**

A WELL PRESENTED ONE BEDROOM GROUND FLOOR APARTMENT. Set in this elegant Georgian Grade II listed building we are delighted to offer this well presented one double bedroom apartment situated close to the town centre and within walking distance of the train station. The property briefly comprises of entrance hallway giving access to the bedroom, bathroom and open plan lounge/ kitchen area with gas central heating throughout. This apartment provides private off road parking to the rear and great views over Banbury and surrounding countryside. Viewing comes highly recommended. With no onward chain this property is ideal for investors or first time buyers.

**Grimsbury Green****Guide Price £265,000**

OFFERED WITH NO ONWARD CHAIN AN EXTENDED THREE BEDROOM SEMI DETACHED HOUSE. Situated within walking distance of the town centre, train station and local amenities. The property comprises of Porch, Entrance hall, Lounge, large kitchen/Diner, Family room, Three bedrooms, Bathroom, Gardens to front and rear, Conservatory, Outhouse, Driveway, Double glazing and Gas central heating. The ground floor is very spacious with Two reception rooms and a large Kitchen/ Diner making this an ideal family home. The lounge is a practical shape with a feature fireplace allowing for good sized furniture. The kitchen/Diner has fitted units and plenty of space for all appliances.

Call or Email now to book your appointment.

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Motors - first for used cars

Used Car Road Test

by Jonathan Crouch



Lots to love about Italian open top 500C



FIAT'S lovable 500 citycar is even harder to resist in 500 C convertible form. One of the most affordable routes to open-topped motoring is also one of the very best. Let's check it out as a used buy.

The History

New born kittens, baby seals, a panda licking a big lollipop, little kids dressed up as teddy bears with big fluffy ears and bow ties..... All the things that make you go aww..... If you like everything with a double-dose of saccharine sweetness, you'll be going all gooey and weak at the knees just from the thought of all that cuteness bundled up together. And when it comes to cars, you'll be just the sort of person that will take next to no time to fall in love with the little convertible we're looking at here, Fiat's 500C. This car is cute made metal.

Good things very often come in small packages and there's little doubt that the little 500 has been a 'good thing' for Fiat, rejuvenating the Italian brand from America to Andalucía. So when the Turin maker offered fixed-top buyers the option of this

open-roof version in 2009, further success looked certain, even though the cabriolet premium was a hefty one. As it turned out, British buyers didn't mind paying a little extra. Though our land sees less of the sun than almost any other nation in Europe, our love of convertible cars remains undiminished, with demand unmatched across the continent. In any case, this Fiat still offered its customers pretty much the most affordable route to open-topped motoring it was possible to take and in its later guises, fresher air from the exhaust complimented that available from opening the roof, thanks to the adoption of clever Twinair engine technology.

The result sounds tempting as a used buy, but will it also appeal to those with tastes beyond the sickly sweet?

What To Look For

The 500C has earned a decent reliability record, helped in no small part by its reliable engines. The biggest reported issue to date has been premature ball joint wear and pressure plate issues – but this manly applies

only to early models. Check for upholstery damage caused by child seats in the back, typical supermarket dints and scrapes, slipping clutches on the manual cars and ensure all the electrical functions – which can get surprisingly sophisticated on up-spec models – work as advertised as these can be expensive to fix. The 500C isn't bad on consumables like brake pads and most people should be able to park it without nerfing the extremities.

On The Road

Step into the 500C and, as you might expect, it's very similar to the hard-topped hatchback. The driving position is quite upright but not uncomfortable, and the large, thin-rimmed steering wheel and billiard ball-type gear-knob both add to the retro flavour. The controls are simple and easy to use, while the large door mirrors compensate for the fairly dramatic loss of rearward vision when the roof is fully folded. To be fair, this aspect isn't as bad as you'd find with cabriolet versions of the MINI or the VW Beetle but you'd still ideally want to make sure that you find

yourself an example of this car fitted with the parking sensors that were optional on most variants from new.

On the open road, this car reveals itself as one of the very few open-tops able to better the dynamic prowess of the fixed-roof version it's based upon. The addition of a rear anti-roll bar and softer springs make this a much pleasanter car to hustle along over point-to-point journeys you can actually complete very quickly due to the perky performance common to all variants bar the entry-level petrol 1.2. This TwinAir unit gets you from rest to sixty in 11s on the way to 108mph – and feels faster. The diesel version's useful 200Nm of torque makes it feel similarly feisty, while the fiery Abarth model rockets to sixty in just 8.1s on the way to nearly 130mph. At that sort of speed, roof-retracted, hairpieces will need to be firmly glued on, though to be fair, one of the many advantages in going with what amounts to a giant sunroof rather than a full convertible is that al-fresco roof buffeting is reduced. It's also worth mention-

ing that when closed, the two-layer fabric top does a fine job of sealing out road and wind noise. Urban-friendly through and through you see.

Overall

We're used to the idea of paying through the nose for items deemed to be on the cutting edge of fashion but Fiat's 500C provides a welcome break from all that. Though the premium this soft-top model demands over its hatchback counterpart seems quite high, the overall package still represents pretty much the most affordable route into soft-top motoring. And the car that comes with it remains one of the trendiest on the road, just as liable to turn heads whether you've plumped for the entry-level 1.2-litre version or shelled out for something much plusher.

Here's a carefree car that's free, sunny and open in its outlook – and very difficult to dislike with a sheer joie de vivre that's central to its charming appeal, turning even the most mundane of commutes into something far more attractive: a journey to be savoured, rather than endured.



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Worcester Victorian Christmas Fayre is the leading Victorian themed street market and is the perfect way to begin your seasonal preparations and celebrations. The atmospheric streets of historic Worcester will offer a fun packed Victorian day out.

FRIDAY 25th NOVEMBER 2016



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CHRISTMAS LUNCH AT WARNERS SINAH WARREN RESORT HOTEL - HAYLING ISLAND

A memorable festive day! Decorations throughout the hotel, mulled wine on arrival. Traditional 3 course Christmas lunch with tea/coffee/mince pies! Christmas pantomime by Sinah entertainment team. Warners at its best - not to be missed!

WEDNESDAY 30th NOVEMBER 2016



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CHRISTMAS AT BLENHEIM PALACE GROUNDS

The Great Outdoors made Magical! The picture perfect gardens at Blenheim Palace opens this Christmas for an after dark festive trail along unique winding paths, beside tranquil water and through extraordinary landscaped parkland - enjoy Blenheim's well stocked gift shops & tasty treats.

THURSDAY 1st DECEMBER 2016



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BIRMINGHAM FRANKFURT CHRISTMAS MARKET & BULLRING

The largest authentic German Christmas market outside of Germany or Austria. The market offers a large range of traditional goods and gifts and a selection of tempting food and drink - a fantastic atmosphere.

SATURDAY 3rd DECEMBER 2016



ONLY
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LONDON & WINTER WONDERLAND - HYDE PARK

It returns once again for 2016 - having welcomed millions of visitors over the years, this festive family favourite with something to excite people of all ages. Choose from one of the popular attractions, experience the thrilling rides, take a trip to Santa Land, browse the Xmas Markets and enjoy the festive spirit with many bars and restaurants to enhance your day.

SUNDAYS 4th & 18th DECEMBER 2016



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WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL CHRISTMAS MARKET

Founded in 2006, the Christmas Market is recognised as one of the best in the Country. Renowned for its unique location, there is no better time to visit Winchester than at Christmas with the historic city centre dressed with Xmas lights. At the heart of the city's festive celebrations is the cathedral, it's Christmas market and real open air ice rink.

SATURDAY 10th DECEMBER 2016



ONLY
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CHELTENHAM SHOPPING, ARCADES AND CHRISTMAS MARKET

Cheltenham with its impressive range of stylish Shops, Arcades, Restaurants and the Christmas Market in the Promenade hosting international traders with a range of great Christmas gifts and ideas - A festive delight!

SATURDAY 17th DECEMBER 2016



PANTOMIME CLASSIC - JACK & THE BEANSTALK

Follow Jack and his hapless brother Simple Simon, and climb a beanstalk of gigantic proportions to cloudland in the spectacular family pantomime! Starring Ashleigh & Pudsey (Britain's Got Talent) & Simon Webbe (from Blue)

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